

January 17, 1970

Mr. Robert M. Lunny, Director
The New Jersey Historical Society
230 Broadway
Newark, N. J. 07104

Dear Mr. Lunny:

This morning I received a call from Mrs. Lucy Milburn with whom I worked for several years in local interracial activities. Mrs. Milburn was testing her memory against mine with reference to activities of the Newark Interracial Council. In the course of this joint review of the past, my memory turned to an article published by the Harvard (Interracial) Educational Review in January 1945, in which I reported then the nature of citizen activity in Newark and Essex County.

I am pleased to submit a reprint of this article, which in turn was the text of an address delivered by me in Boston in the Fall of 1944. On pages 68, 69 and 70 is a chronological report of three interracial organizations, of which the first was the Newark Interracial Council, and the ultimate banding of these independent organizations in the formation of the Essex County Inter-group Council as a coordinating body. My marginal notes place the birth of the Interracial Council as in or before the early 1930's. My experience with it began in 1931 when I came to Newark as the Urban League executive. Hope this will be helpful in supplementing Mrs. Milburn's report to your Miss Dudley.

Yours,

P.S. Please check your secretary's list of papers in "Negro."

THE NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



283 BROADWAY
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07104
201-683-3839

November 28, 1969.

Mr. Harold A. Lett
380 Mt. Prospect Ave., 10G
Newark, New Jersey 07104

Dear Mr. Lett:

I find that I have never replied to your good letter of October 16 with its list of historical data concerning the negro in New Jersey. In spite of my lateness in writing to you, I do want you to know how much your interest in this project is appreciated. Mrs. May, our librarian, has had the list you sent since it arrived here last month and is attempting to find these titles to add to our collection. I am sure that she will let you know the results of her search.

I do hope to have the pleasure of meeting you some time soon. It is always good to find a person who is interested in our historical work here in New Jersey.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert M. Lunny
Robert M. Lunny
Director

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August 15, 1969

Mr. Reeve Schley, Jr. President
The New Jersey Historical Society
230 Broadway
Newark, N. J. 07108

Dear Mr. Schley:

I am honored to receive your letter of the 11th, inviting me to serve in an advisory capacity to the proposed center on Negro History.

Because of severe restraints placed upon me by the chronic illness of my wife, I have been forced to curtail almost to the vanishing point, my outside committees and organizational activities. Nevertheless, I am interested in your project.

I shall not be able to attend the meeting on Sept. 13th, but if you see a way that I can be of assistance through submission of briefs or data, I shall do whatever lies within my power.

Very truly yours,

THE NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



230 BROADWAY
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07104
201-468-3999

August 11, 1969

Mr. Harold Lett
87 Spruce Street
Newark, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Lett:

A prime recommendation emanating from the New Jersey Historical Society Professional Conference on the Negro in New Jersey on February 1, 1969 was that the Society should make a distinct effort to enlarge its collections relating to Negro history in New Jersey. Specifically the conference recommended the development of a center at the Society's headquarters for the collection of materials on Negro history, to include pictorial materials, manuscripts, personal papers and memorabilia, as well as books, pamphlets, documents and association publications.

For this purpose, an ad-hoc committee on the Afro-American contribution to the culture and history of New Jersey is being formed. You have been recommended to serve as an advisory member of this special committee. Your attendance is requested at a committee organization meeting to be held at the New Jersey Historical Society, 230 Broadway, Newark, on Saturday 13, 1969 at 10:00 a.m.

Please sign and return the enclosed card indicating your willingness to attend.

Sincerely yours,

Reeve Schley

Reeve Schley, Jr.
President

Enclosure

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October 16, 1969

Mr. Robert M. Lunny, Director
The New Jersey Historical Society
230 Broadway
Newark, N. J. 07104

Dear Mr. Lunny:

Thank you for your understanding letter of
the 10th.

I have been giving thought to the project
toward which your committee's interests will be directed,
and thought it might be helpful to some slight degree if
I relayed these thoughts to you. I have in mind a number
of documents and studies which without doubt are out of
circulation, but may be of some value to you. On the
attached sheet, I have tried from a fading memory, to give
descriptions and leads to these data, even though the for-
mal titles have been lost to memory. To my mind, each of
these documents, if unearthed, will present a significant
story of a period of life in New Jersey, relating to the
race-relations scene. I concede also, that all or many of
these will already have been brought to your attention.

Very truly yours,

HISTORICAL DATA CONCERNING THE NEGRO IN NEW JERSEY

1. "Economic Conditions of the New Jersey Negro" (approx. title) circa 1935-36
Doctoral Dissertation by Dr. Edgerton Hall, Rutgers University, containing original research, supported by compilation of available data from many sources. In published form. (author deceased)
2. "Education of Negroes in New Jersey" 1941, Bureau of Publications, Columbia University; Doctoral Dissertation by Marian Thompson Wright; Original research and compilation of available data tracing development of educational facilities and services for Negroes from ante-bellum period. (author deceased)
3. "Employment Opportunities for Negro Workers in N.J." (approx. title); MSS unpublished; in several county and state-wide reports of original research of employment policies and practices of 1800 New Jersey businesses, industry and utilities. 1936-37. Sponsored and compiled by N.J. Institutions and Agencies, Dr. Emil Frankel, technical supervisor; N.J. Urban League (Lett, executive) designer and study "overseer"
4. "Negro Business in New Jersey" (approx. title). Unpublished MSS of original state-wide research on number and nature of Negro business operations. (1936) Sponsored and supervised by defunct N.J. Manual Training School for Negro Youth, Bordentown, N.J. under permission of the N.J. Department of Education. Probably in archives of N.J. Department of Education.
5. Bound but unpublished Minutes of Board of Directors of the New Jersey Urban League; 1917 - 1943. In archives of the Urban League of Essex County, 58 Jones Street, Newark; James B. Pawley, Exec. Director.

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The following items are purely a matter of conjecture on my part, but offered for whatever value they may possess:

Howard University has been the publication site of the Journal of Negro History for a number of years. I have recollection of seeing papers and articles relating in part to the New Jersey scene. It may be possible and practicable to have the University History Department assign one or more students (N.J. youth preferably, and with slight subsidy) to research these files.

I recall, while doing some work in Perth Amboy, hearing repeated references to this town having an interesting history before and during the Civil War, relating to Negro residents. The nature of the story is unclear, but tentative inquiry may unearth something of interest.

THE NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



October 10, 1969.

230 BROADWAY
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07104
201-488-9999

Mr. Harold A. Lett
380 Mt. Prospect Ave. 10G
Newark, New Jersey 07104

Dear Mr. Lett:

I am sorry that the illness of Mrs. Lett prevents you from taking an active part in the work of the committee to collect historical material on the Afro-American in New Jersey. I am glad, however, that you will be able to help on occasion and I am so advising the committee chairman.

Sincerely yours,

Robert M. Lunny
Robert M. Lunny
Director